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# AGRICULTURAL MARKETING

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GREEN BEANS ARE TESTED  
FOR QUALITY

Blemish Scorable

GPO



# FOOD makes the difference

*A new industry-Government sponsored campaign has been launched to involve and benefit low-income consumers.*

**L**OCAL COMMUNITY organizations will share a major role in a new industry-Government sponsored consumer education campaign that is a mix of in-store and community-wide activities designed to involve and benefit low-income consumers.

With the theme "Food Makes the Difference", a campaign was launched on a pilot basis last September in the near northwest section of Washington, D.C. It is built around the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Stamp Program and is based on close cooperation of food store chains, the local welfare department, and community groups. National Association of Food Chains is promoting the drive.

The program was developed so the plan might be "packaged" and shipped to cities where it could be produced by food chains in many different low-income areas with cooperation from local welfare departments and community action groups.

In Washington, local organizations, particularly the action groups, are providing volunteer and paid

workers for the campaign. They also give guidance and counseling to campaign strategists—a contribution that is proving valuable in the sensitive areas of community relations in poor, black neighborhoods.

Basic parts of this pilot drive are a skit in which local residents take part, a cooking demonstration by a nutritionist or home economist using inexpensive foods, a slide presentation on how to shop in a supermarket, and a panel of low income consumers discussing food stamps.

Under the heading "Food Stamps May Be For You . . .", a four color leaflet, illustrated with a stylized fox head lists in simple language the steps one must take to get food stamps. It also lists the kinds of records and papers an applicant must take with him to the food stamp office.

A Food Stamp Boosters club was organized to improve in-store service to food stamp customers. Members of the club are food stamp users who tell their friends about food stamps and encourage them to apply

for the stamps.

Of all campaign features, the Boosters Club shows promise of being the most popular. It was set up as a good way for food stamp customers to get the kind of attention, courtesy and help they should have in the food store.

Special booster cards, issued by the store manager and bearing his signature, remind store employees that "The holder of this card is an honored customer and should be extended every courtesy."

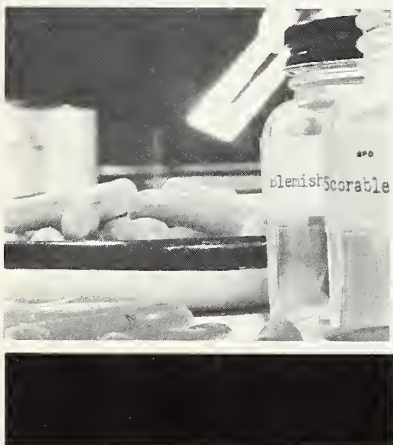
Ultimately, the "Food Makes the Difference" campaign will maintain a continual flow of mass media releases, radio spots, low-cost menus and recipes, to be used in store advertising, distributed by volunteers, or otherwise brought to the attention of low-income consumers.

Campaign planners seek to do this by getting food industry groups interested and involved.

USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service is standing by to assist the campaign with information, publications and resources people. □

## COVER STORY

Green beans are one of many commodities tested to insure quality. This year marks the fortieth anniversary of processed fruit and vegetable standards. See page 14.



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# CHILD NUTRITION LEAPS AHEAD

*There is now more Federal assistance available than ever before to help the States and local communities feed their children.*

By Howard P. Davis, Deputy Administrator, Consumer Food Programs, C&MS, USDA

**R**EAL PROGRESS in the battle against hunger and malnutrition in this Nation is now being recorded. We are improving our tools to carry on the fight and together with private groups and industry are escalating efforts to help improve nutrition for all our citizens.

We have made substantial gains in reaching all needy groups with more and better food assistance in the past year. One special concern is child nutrition and this year we are able to reach more needy children in this country with better food than ever before in history. This is a good thing for all of us.

At present we have more available Federal assistance than ever before to help the States and local communities provide all children with the nutrition they need, in and out of school.

This is a consensus and a commitment to move forward and get the job done. When we talk about a commitment to the task of eradicating hunger and malnutrition in the United States, it has to be truly *national*, however. The challenge is here for public agencies at the National level, at the State level, and especially at the local level. And the challenge is here for the private sector, too—for educators and nutritionists, for business and industry, for clubs and organizations, and for just plain citizens.

Federal funds and personnel alone have never done and can never do the total job. We are dependent not only upon the support and coopera-

tion of local governments to take and operate these food programs, but equally dependent upon public recognition and help in making them continuing and effective programs.

The National School Lunch Program, administered by the Consumer and Marketing Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is making it possible for an estimated 20 million children this year to obtain balanced lunches at low cost in about 74,000 of the Nation's elementary and secondary schools. This co-operative Federal-State-local program, now in its 22nd year, is a major factor in reaching the goal of an adequate diet and good food habits for every American child.

It became apparent early in this decade that nutrition can't be turned on and off with the school bell, especially for millions of needy youngsters whose families are too poor to provide the foods and guidance children require.

Also apparent was that too many rural and old downtown city schools had no lunch facilities nor resources. This deprived all attending children of an opportunity to obtain lunches, regardless of income. And we found that many schools with lunchrooms, but attended by a high percentage of needy children, were financially unable to provide all the free or reduced-price lunches required.

Now, through amendments to the National School Lunch Act and the newer Child Nutrition Act and increased funds this year—we are able to accelerate efforts to correct those

situations. We stand on the threshold of a new decade that will enable this Nation to improve nutrition among children with far more effective concepts than in the past.

Funds and donated foods available now make it possible to provide food services to:

- Pre-school children in public and non-profit private child-care centers.
- Needy school-age children in organized summer recreation and day-camp activities.
- Additional needy school children through increased funds to pay for more school lunches and breakfasts and to help schools buy equipment to start or expand food service programs.
- Infants and needy mothers with special supplementary foods when health officials determine them to be suffering from or in danger of general and continued malnutrition.

Although the effort to bring nutrition to deprived children merits our highest priority, hand-in-hand with this effort and equally important is nutrition education for all children. We know that too many youngsters whose families can afford fully adequate diets don't get them simply because they lack the knowledge or desire to eat properly.

Finally, we should remember the words of President Johnson in his Presidential Proclamation of National School Lunch Week last October: "A well-nourished, healthy, intelligent child is the most precious asset America can possess." □





The Mennonite canning operation begins its season in Kansas in November. The rig then makes a 5-month swing through Nebraska, Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Missouri, and Oklahoma—visiting Mennonite congregations along the way.

Members of the individual congregations do the actual work involved. John Hostetler, director of material aid for the Mennonite Central Committee's overseas service program, says he expects 5,000 people to be directly involved in the current season's operation—either in donating the livestock used or in doing the actual canning. Many more donate money, he says, to help buy meat and pay for other canning expenses. And some 100,000 Mennonites indirectly support the program.

The Mennonites have field staffs in many parts of the world which aid in distributing the products to the hungry and needy. Some products are also turned over to missionaries of other churches. In eastern Africa's Tanzania, for instance, distribution is handled by Lutheran and Presbyterian missionaries. And in recent years, a large share of the meat products has been donated to hospitals in underdeveloped areas.

*The author is a Staff Officer with the Processed Food Inspection Division, C&MS, USDA.*

**F**OR FIVE MONTHS beginning in November, charitable Mennonite congregations over a ten-State area will be canning meat products in their "mobile clinic."

Their cannery has this name because it enables thousands of Mennonite members to take part in a good cause—helping to feed the world's hungry.

The products of their labor—canned beef chunks, pork chunks, beef broth, and lard—are distributed by Mennonite overseas aid workers throughout the world.

The idea of Mennonite congregations processing food for the needy dates back to the early 1940's, when some of the churches in Kansas and Missouri went together and bought a mobile canning rig. Two Kansas farmers—Willard Vogt and Jess Kauffman—supervised the operation. Vogt operated the rig during its first four years. Then it was turned over

to the Mennonite Central Committee, which now supervises its operation.

But this season's canning operation has a special significance attached to it. For the first time, the entire processing procedure will be carried out under the Federal meat inspection program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Meat inspectors of USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service will make sure the products conform to Federal standards for wholesomeness and that all processing is carried out under strict sanitation.

Before 1968, this kind of charitable work was exempt from Federal meat inspection. But the Wholesome Meat Act of 1967 removed the exemptions as a means of bringing about a totally inspected meat supply and building greater consumer confidence in United States meat products.

As it makes its annual trek into Pennsylvania, the rig is operated for one day by a group of Presbyterians who heard about the "clinic" and wanted to take part. The meat product output from that day goes to an orphanage in Korea.

Hostetler expects this season's total output to reach 150 tons of canned products. All the meat used in processing is federally inspected. The canning operation itself is under continuous inspection, and all labels on the products are approved by USDA.

The "mobile clinic" has been given its own establishment number, which appears for identification on each label within the round mark of Federal inspection. □



# Protecting the Nations' Meat and Poultry— CALL IN A DOCTOR!

*C&MS has veterinarians check food animals so that unfit meat and poultry won't reach your table.*

By Dr. Lois E. Hinson



*A veterinary meat inspector checks a meat carcass to make sure the meat is wholesome.*

“CAN YOU LOOK at this meat, Doctor?”

Sound odd? It shouldn't. These skills of the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine are a vital part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's meat and poultry inspection program.

Veterinarians such as those employed by USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service are uniquely qualified to thoroughly examine food animals. Their professional training is basic to preventing unfit livestock or poultry from becoming food on your table.

Federal inspection requires examination of all animals and birds, both before and after slaughter and during all the steps of processing. In the meat or poultry plant, a veterinarian supervises the inspection of red meat animals or poultry and, in some cases, of processed meat products. He also enforces sanitation rules in these plants and sees that products are handled properly to prevent contamination and spoilage.

Only a veterinarian, who knows where to look for and how to detect diseases in animals, can condemn a meat carcass. Other inspectors detect abnormalities. Final review and disposition of an abnormal animal, carcass, or carcass part are the responsibility of the veterinarian.

The veterinarian also supervises the work of the poultry inspector.

Again, he (or she) alone has authority to rule on an unusual condition, such as diagnosing diseases in lots of live broilers or turkeys.

*The author is Staff Officer,  
Slaughter Inspection Division,  
C&MS, USDA.*

But the role of the veterinarian in this public health area extends beyond the packinghouse floor. Many times when he detects a problem, he furnishes information about the source and identity of a diseased animal to animal health authorities who use his information in their efforts to eradicate disease back at the farm or ranch. Using his knowledge to help prevent future contamination is a significant service the veterinarian provides to producers, processors, and purchasers.

The veterinarian also checks to see if harmful chemical or biological residues might be present in the meat he is examining. If he identifies a possibly harmful condition, he alerts proper authorities who check the pesticides or other materials being used in the area from which the animal came. His diligence may prevent a problem from recurring.

A veterinarian also might be responsible for helping to formulate uniform inspection procedures, or for training prospective inspectors

at USDA inspection training centers and packing plants.

Since the Wholesome Meat Act became law in 1967 and the Wholesome Poultry Products Act in 1968, many veterinary inspectors have met with State officials and have helped train State inspectors. Both laws require the States to develop inspection programs equal to the Federal inspection program.

The educational background of veterinarians includes courses in meat hygiene or meat inspection. When he is hired as a Federal inspector, a veterinarian participates in a 12-week training program designed to accustom him to packinghouse procedures and Federal regulations and to teach him supervisory skills.

USDA also employs veterinarians with additional specialized training. They may serve as food technologists, microbiologists, toxicologists, pathologists, parasitologists, or they may be in other related fields. In these jobs they provide important information to the veterinary inspector in the field who may need laboratory confirmation to make a final decision.

“I think we'll need laboratory analysis for this animal.”

“Okay, Doctor. Thank you” . . . for helping to protect our food supply. □

# C & MS Grain Division: A Common Denominator

*Its testing lab insures the wholesomeness  
and quality of many foods you eat.*

By George Lipscomb

A SOLDIER, A SCHOOL child, a hospital patient, a prisoner, a disaster victim, and needy Indian families—what do these people have in common?

Popcorn, cake mix, doughnut mix, spaghetti, macaroni, egg noodles, soda crackers, salad oil, shortening, cornmeal, wheat flour—what do these foods have in common?

These people and the eleven foods all have the same common denominator—the Grain Division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service.

C&MS' Grain Division tests these foods—and some 20 others—for wholesomeness and quality for government agencies, State institutions, and commercial firms requesting the service. The foods, in turn, are distributed to millions of recipients annually—including the soldier, the school child, the hospital patient, the prisoner, the disaster victim, and needy Indian families.

Last fiscal year, C&MS' Grain Division testing laboratory in Beltsville, Md., conducted nearly 65,000 separate tests for approximately 30 commodities. In addition, thousands of other tests were made by contract laboratories under direct supervision of the Beltsville laboratory.

*The author is Chief, Commodity Inspection Branch, Grain Division, C&MS, USDA.*

The tests are as varied and as interesting as the foods themselves.

Take popcorn, for example. This popular food is bought by the Department of Defense for soldiers in Vietnam. The food has proven to be an excellent morale booster for combat troops thousands of miles from home.

But what do you test popcorn for? Among other things, the popcorn is tested by C&MS' Grain Division for damaged kernels which will not pop, moisture content, and popping volume—the volume of popcorn that is produced from a given number of kernels. There is also the most exciting test of all—the taste test.

All of these tests for popcorn are based on Federal specifications developed by the Department of Defense in cooperation with USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service. Most of the foods tested by C&MS' Grain Division are reviewed according to Federal specifications developed for the various commodities. In most cases, the Grain Division has lent a guiding hand in the development of new specifications.

The Defense Department also buys many other foods for soldiers on active duty—and C&MS' Grain Division tests a number of them, including dry active yeast and vegetable salad oil.

The Veterans Administration is another large food buyer. Three of the foods C&MS' Grain Division tests for the VA are spaghetti, egg noodles, and macaroni. These foods are tested for moisture and protein content and, in the case of egg noodles, the amount of eggs added to the product.

You might associate cake and doughnut mixes only with the individual homemaker. But C&MS' Grain Division tests these products, too—for the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

How do you test cake mixes? For moisture content and overall keeping qualities, as well as baking volume, report C&MS Grain Division officials. Cake mixes, they say, are widely distributed to Indian families living on Federal reservations.

Cake mixes are also tested by the Grain Division for various State government agencies. These mixes, in turn, are distributed by the States to their various institutions, including prisons and hospitals.

The Federal Government's General Services Administration is another large buyer of food products. GSA buys foods for the many cafeterias it operates in Government buildings around the country. Some of the products tested for GSA by C&MS' Grain Division include cake mix, cornmeal, shortening, and wheat flour.

Many tests for many foods for many people—this is the work of the testing laboratory in C&MS' Grain Division. By testing foods for other Government agencies, State institutions and commercial firms, C&MS' Grain Division—the common denominator—helps assure these large-scale food buyers that they are buying high-quality foods—wholesome, nutritious, vitamin-enriched—for millions of people. □

## OVER 20,000 SEED TESTS MADE IN 1968

More than 20,000 seed tests were conducted by Consumer and Marketing Service seed analysts of the U.S. Department of Agriculture as part of their 1968 activities. Their work is required under the Federal Seed Act, a truth-in-labeling law for farm and garden seeds.

A total of 14 violations of the Federal Seed Act involving 31 seed shipments were prosecuted in 1968. Judgments were reached in 13 of these cases. Warnings were issued in 400 less serious cases.

A part of the job of seed analysts is to insure that seed imported into the United States meets U.S. requirements. In 1968, about 7,600 lots of imported seed valued at \$13.5 million were inspected.

To more efficiently enforce the Federal Seed Act, C&MS consolidated the activities of its five Seed Branch field offices into four.

Two amendments to regulations were adopted in fiscal 1968 which required labeling of two classes of hybrid seed. □



# STAMPS ARE LIVELIHOOD FOR SOME

By Jack Creech

IF THE ALARM CLOCK goes off as it should, Mrs. Dallas Blanton pulls over and lifts herself up out of bed at 4:30 in the morning.

She has to get to work.

Long before the morning sun has filtered through the mist and lights up the red dirt road twisting its ruts and gullies before her house, she slips her bare feet into the worn, rubber shower shoes and begins to rise.

Even in the early coolness the flies are swarming around her head with their monotonous dull drone through the heavy sickening odor of things left unclean; the children's clothes on the chair, under the kitchen table; the yellow-dirt-coated wooden floor; the chimney hole stuffed with grease-stained newspapers. Through the stench-laden air buzz the flies and back again to cling to the congealed food on yesterday's dishes.

She makes her way through the house, down the thin dirt path to the outhouse—nearly hidden with strong growing bushes.

She continues down the path to the film-covered stream, the same one the cows drink out of, and dips out some water in a pot. No running water; no hot water for washing.

Usually, by the time she comes back, one of her nine children has tumbled out of bed and is groping around, hungry-eyed.

She wanders around the house—getting out the eggs and bacon, waking up the rest of the kids, running the dog out of the house, his claws clattering on the ragged tile floor.

Only two more eggs, a few strips of bacon, a half loaf of bread. Food. Got to get some more food today with those stamps.

She cuts up the breakfast and

divides it among her young—five boys and four girls. Then her mother comes in to help dress the children and send them off on their mile or so walk out to the paved road where they meet the school bus.

While her mother prepares her children, Dallas Blanton is driven by her father to Gardner-Webb college cafeteria where she helps cook.

She works from 5:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. then walks the two-mile journey home each day because her father is still on the job.

Today she will stop at the bank to buy her food stamps. Before she was working, \$3 would buy her \$90 worth of groceries. Now she can get \$122 worth for \$74.

Food! Not alcohol, not tobacco, not a flashy coat of paint for the car that just sits, immobile for months, in front of her house.

Food to nourish her nine children and send them off to school each morning. Food to give herself enough energy to work. Food that she gets from the stamps the Cleveland County Welfare Department provides for her.

Dallas Blanton, one of many mothers the food stamp program is helping, has been on welfare for the last two years.

On this sun-kissed afternoon, she has just gotten off work and is climbing up a ravine behind her house with her mother, who is bringing in the laundry.

Still wearing her white cafeteria uniform, she leads the way into the house, a cement black structure that resembles a small meeting place.

She takes a seat on a straight, hard-backed chair. Her eyes hold a gentle, responsive light and she appears unaware, unaffected by the wretched, poor conditions around

her. She begins to tell about it:

"If it hadn't been for those food stamps, I might have never got back on my feet. I broke my leg back in November and was laid up in the hospital for three months, kids with nothing to eat and me out of work. I just don't know how I would have made it without no help."

She was twisting a wire coat hanger nervously between her hands; she leaned back, looked at the ceiling and groped for more words.

"I get lard, flour, meat and bread. In the morning I normally feeds 'em eggs, bacon and sometimes grits and milk. Usually just water though, from the creek out back."

She motioned toward the back door where the screen was torn off. There was a narrow dirt path that wandered beside a stunted path of undergrowth.

Above the tangle of shrubs was a strip of barbed wire, laden with a colorful assortment of dried clothes, that led lifelessly down to a small stream.

"Can you imagine walking down there every morning in the winter-time for water. It gets awful cold sometimes, so cold I can't even wash clothes. I have to send 'em off to the laundry."

"I'm doing the best I can with what I got though; it ain't all that bad."

At that time, her children trickled through the door, home from school. They began playing on the floor, squirming, squealing, hugging each other and smiling sometimes.

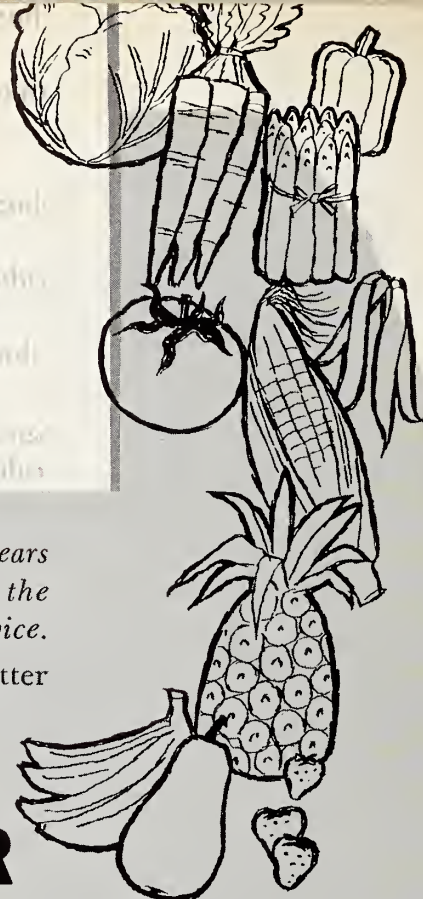
It wasn't that bad. □

*The author is staff writer for the Shelby, N.C., Daily Star, from which this article was reprinted with permission.*

*C&MS trains reporters for 1 or 2 years to make sure they report accurately for the Fruit and Vegetable Market News Service.*

## LEARNING TO BE A FRUIT AND VEGETABLE MARKET NEWS REPORTER

By Clay J. Ritter



### "BEANS-SNAP

#### SLIGHTLY STRONGER

Bu bkt & bu crt Harvesters

NJ 4.50-5.00 fair qual 3.50-4.00

Wax few ord qual 1.50

NY 4.50-5.00 fair qual 3.75

E SH MD 4.50-5.00"

*Excerpt, September 6, 1968 Philadelphia Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Market Report, Federal-State Market News.*

**L**EARNING THE LANGUAGE of market news is probably the easiest part of the job for the new fruit and vegetable market news reporter. How to collect the information and put it together into a meaningful report is the hard part—and that part takes up most of the 1 or 2 years of individual training given each new fruit and vegetable reporter.

The Federal-State Market News Service, administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service in cooperation with State agencies, operates fruit and vegetable market news offices at 24 terminal (wholesale) markets and 47 production areas. The C&MS Fruit and Vegetable Division, with a staff of 52

Federal reporters, normally trains 2 or 3 new reporters each year.

Federal reporters staff both wholesale and shipping point market news offices, so a new reporter must learn both types of operation. This year, one reporter is in training at the Chicago wholesale market, the principal training office, and another is finishing his training at Philadelphia. State reporters, who work in jointly operated Federal-State offices, are trained in a similar manner so that all reports issued can meet the same high standards of uniformity and clarity expected by the fruit and vegetable industry.

The new reporter, with a Bachelor's degree in agriculture, is trained for 2 years. An applicant with a Master's degree or a background of 4 years or more of appropriate experience in the marketing of fresh fruits and vegetables usually can complete training in 1 year.

At both terminal market and shipping point offices, the training officer is an experienced fruit and vegetable reporter. At the terminal market, the new reporter accompanies the training officer on his daily rounds to learn about the fruit and vegetable business—how sales

are made, and on what terms.

Most important, he learns how to obtain information about sales from the producers on the market. The information must be accurate and it must be obtained quickly, every day. Supplying information to a market news reporter is strictly voluntary, not required by law, so the reporter must use a good deal of tact in talking to men who are busy with their own work.

On the wholesale market, reporting the market "tone" or trend for a commodity and the prices wholesalers receive for sales to retailers, institutions, and others is the main business of market news. Producers, shippers, wholesalers, and others rely on the factual information reported by the Market News Service to help them determine if there is a good market for a particular commodity, how the supply is, and how much they can expect to sell or buy a commodity for.

The excerpt at the beginning of this article, for instance, tells producers and shippers that the market for snap beans in Philadelphia that day was slightly stronger than it was the day before; prices for beans of good merchantable quality and con-



dition are running the same—\$4.50-5.00—for supplies from New Jersey, New York, and the Eastern Shore of Maryland. Because the prices quoted are the general market prices received by most wholesalers, the individual wholesaler can see how his prices compare to the general market, and buyers know how much they can expect to pay.

How does the reporter decide the general market price and demand? That comes with experience in working with the various fruits and vegetables on the terminal market. For potatoes, for example, the reporter might have to gather data on sales of 15 carloads to be sure he has a true impression of the market; but for a specialty product like artichokes (with relatively small volume), four or five sales of one or more containers may tell the story.

To give an accurate picture of sales, the terminal market reporter must learn the varieties, grades and sizes, types of containers, and States of origin for at least 65 commodities, and he must be able to tell if the commodity is in good, fair, or poor condition. All these factors, and others, affect its price.

Learning to report shipping point sales—the prices wholesale and chain-store buyers pay shippers at production areas or shipping points and the quantity of supplies shipped each day—is the next phase of training. Because of the widely scattered

locations of individual growers and shippers, the market reporter must do most of his interviewing by telephone, rather than by personal interview as at terminal markets.

Besides gathering and analyzing information on demand and market conditions (the trend or tone of the market), prices, and supplies, the shipping point reporter must learn how to compile the data and put it together with related information from competing production areas and wholesale markets. This information, and data on daily rail and truck shipments, truck arrivals, and cars unloaded or on track at major terminal markets, is transmitted to him through the 20,000-mile leased-wire system that connects all market news offices and the headquarters office at Washington, D.C.

The reporter makes up a daily mimeographed report of selected information of interest to his area, to give as complete a story as possible to the users of market news. In addition to the printed report, the reporter must be ready to provide and discuss the information by phone. At some offices, the reporter makes tape recordings up to 5 times a day, so that up-to-the-minute information is available to callers on telephone tape recorders. Many reporters also

broadcast market news on radio or television. Newspapers also help speed release of market news.

Accuracy, together with the ability to get along with people, is emphasized in training fruit and vegetable reporters. Businessmen depend on the market news reports to give them unbiased information on market situations. The reports are considered as bona fide evidence of the market situation in courts of law. Railroads and others use them in settling claims.

Market reporters check the information they obtain with as many sellers as they can, and they recheck with buyers.

Gathering, analyzing, and reporting the facts is the major part of the job, but the fruit and vegetable reporter also learns to do all the clerical work in the office, from operating the teletype machine to getting out mail. After one year's training, the new reporter may be sent out on his own, and he's got to know how to be a one-man office and to train inexperienced clerks when necessary. □

*The author is Chief, Market News Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Division, C&MS, USDA.*

*Trainee Mike Pflueger watches as teletype operator Edward Hammie explains operation of the teletype machine.*



*Dick Koebele, Assistant Officer in Charge, Fruit and Vegetable Market News, Philadelphia, shows Mike what to look for in reporting condition and quality of lettuce.*

# CONSUMER AND MARKETING BRIEFS

*Selected short items on C&MS activities in consumer protection, marketing services, market regulation, and consumer food programs.*

## **C&MS GRADES FOOD AND FIBER FOR QUALITY**

Graders in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service and in cooperating State departments of agriculture last fiscal year certified the quality of 511 billion pounds of food and fiber. This included 21 billion pounds of meat and poultry, 62 billion pounds of fruits and vegetables, 8.5 billion pounds of cotton, and 406 billion pounds of grain.

Another aspect of C&MS' voluntary grading program is the continuous inspection service provided on a fee-for-service basis for fruits, vegetables, eggs, and dairy products.

Last fiscal year, under this voluntary service, C&MS inspected for wholesomeness 90 percent of the Nation's production of liquid and frozen eggs and 75 percent of the dried eggs—752 million pounds. In addition, nearly 8 billion pounds of canned and frozen fruits and vegetables were processed under C&MS' continuous inspection program last year.

Official USDA grades for agricultural products provide consumers with reliable guides to quality for many foods they buy, producers with a means of determining value of the products they produce, and retailers and shippers with a uniform language for trade.

## **COMPLIMENTS FOR SOUTHEASTERN POTATOES**

The reactivated Federal marketing order for potatoes grown in Virginia and North Carolina resulted in at least one very satisfied customer during the recent season.

A major buyer from Toronto, Canada, reported that his shipment this year was the best he has ever

received. According to word reaching the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service, the customer found the quality so high he was able to continue his potato sales in Canada for several weeks longer than usual. The buyer assured growers he would continue purchases from the Southeast production area.

The marketing order, which was inactive for 17 years, provides for Federal-State inspection of the potatoes to protect against shipment of low grades into market channels. For the two recent seasons under the order, 97 percent of the potatoes shipped were graded U.S. No. 1. In addition, the order helped stabilize returns to growers despite the production which was 28 percent above average last season. There were, nevertheless, some difficulties in marketing late plantings delayed by rains as these sales overlapped with shipments from Middle Atlantic areas.

A move to further update the reactivated marketing order was supported by 88 percent of the growers voting in a referendum earlier this year.

## **FEDERAL-STATE INSPECTORS CHECK POTATOES SHIPPED TO URUGUAY**

The Federal-State Inspection Service helped get the first U.S. shipments of fresh potatoes to Uruguay under P.L. 480 off to a good start last summer, by checking the potatoes for quality and condition before they were shipped. The Federal-State Inspection Service is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service.

The P.L. 480 credit sale to Uruguay, with payment in U.S. dollars, was an excellent opportunity for

U.S. potato exporters to show Uruguayan consumers the fine quality of U.S. potatoes.

Federal-State inspectors checked and certified the quality of the potatoes during the packing and loading of the potatoes into rail cars at several dozen packinghouses in Aroostook County, Maine. The grade specified in the contract was U.S. No. 1. To make sure the potatoes were still in good condition and up-to-grade before they were loaded on ships at Searsport, Maine, inspectors worked from sunup to sundown rechecking all carloads—a total of 350 cars, each packed with 550 hundred-pound sacks of potatoes. C&MS' Fruit and Vegetable Division employees supervised the inspections.

The potatoes arrived in Uruguay in fine shape.

## **MILK FOR MILLIONS**

Drinking milk for some 127 million Americans comes from milk dealers who get their supply from dairy farmers regularly serving the Nation's 67 Federal milk marketing areas, according to the Consumer and Marketing Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The farmers delivered 56.6 billion pounds of milk during calendar year 1968—over 13 billion half gallons. This milk moving off the farm into the marketing stream was valued to the farmers at about \$3.2 billion at minimum order prices.

Federal orders are initiated at the request of dairy farmers, and administered by the C&MS Dairy Division through local market administrators.

The 67 marketing areas in which Federal milk orders were operating at the end of 1968 included most of the Nation's major population centers. New orders, expansions in marketing areas of older orders, and the



population growth in areas already covered, accounted for the increase in total population in the milk order areas.

The orders set minimum or floor prices to dairy farmers, based essentially on supply and demand conditions in each marketing area, which dealers are to pay for the milk they receive from dairy farmers.

The Federal orders do not regulate retail milk prices. But they serve to stabilize marketing conditions between dairy farmers and milk dealers. And this gives the farmer the confidence he needs to make long-range plans and investments to keep the American consumer supplied with a sure supply of fresh, wholesome milk.

## CONDITIONS OF U.S. NEGROES

"Recent Trends in Social and Economic Conditions of Negroes in the United States." That's the topic of a study issued jointly by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Bureau of the Census in July 1968.

Three summary paragraphs are especially significant:

"In most instances, the new data show important gains in the level of living for Negroes in the United States.

"Typically, Negroes are more likely than ever before to be earning decent incomes, holding good jobs, living in better neighborhoods, and completing their education. In many cases not only have Negroes achievements reached all-time highs, but the relative gap between whites and Negroes has also diminished . . .

Despite these gains, in some instances striking gains, it should be noted—and stressed—that Negroes generally remain very far behind whites in most social and economic categories. Compared to whites, Negroes still are more than three times as likely to be in poverty, twice as likely to be unemployed, and three times as likely to die in infancy or childbirth. In large cities, more than half of all Negroes live in poor neighborhoods."

Specifically, the report says: "About one million nonwhites rose

above poverty levels last year according to the poverty standard of the Federal Government." (About 92% of the nonwhite population is Negro).

Also, "The number of Negroes living in the central cities of metropolitan areas had grown steadily and sharply until very recently—an increase of 5½ million occurred between 1950 and 1966. However, between 1966 and 1968 the increase stopped, and there is some evidence to indicate an actual decline—constituting a sharp change in recent trends," due, perhaps, to fewer Negroes leaving the South and more moving to suburbs, though the suburban proportion has remained constant at 5 percent.

## POVERTY REDUCED IN 1967

Here are some highlights of a report issued in August by the Bureau of the Census, headed, "Family Income Advances, Poverty Reduced in 1967."

"Family income continued its upward trend in 1967. The estimated median income of families in the United States reached \$8,000 for the first time, up by 6½ percent from \$7,500 the previous year. With prices also rising . . . the gain in real purchasing power averaged about 4 percent, in line with the trend of recent years."

\* \* \* \* \*

"The total number of poor persons in 1967 was estimated at 25.9 million, down by 2.9 million from the 1966 level of 28.8 million."

## FARMERS' STAKE IN FREIGHT RATES

Transportation specialists in U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service played a key role in two recent actions dealing with proposed general railroad freight rate increases asked for by the railroad industry. These efforts helped C&MS transportation specialists to delay one of the actions pending further investigation, and,

*Continued on page 12*

# FOOD TIPS

—from USDA's Consumer  
and Marketing Service

Are you having *poultry* over the holidays? Why not try chicken, duck, turkey, goose, or guinea? Always complete the cooking at one time—never partially cook it, then finish cooking at a later time. Remember, poultry, like meat, is perishable. Keep it refrigerated or frozen until cooking time. Use fresh-chilled poultry within 1 or 2 days. Refrigerate any leftovers promptly. Buy USDA Grade A poultry for assurance of both quality and wholesomeness, since only Federally-inspected poultry may be graded.

What's in a name? The exact name of a federally inspected processed meat or poultry product gives you valuable information, reminds USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service. Products called "*Gravy and Beef*" or "*Gravy with Pork*," for example, will contain more gravy than meat. If you want more meat, buy "*Beef and Gravy*" or "*Pork with Gravy*." "*Pork and Beans*" is the only exception to this rule.

Roasted, broiled, or pan-fried—USDA Prime or USDA Choice *lamb* can be cooked in a variety of ways. No matter what method you prefer, lamb will taste better when served piping hot or chilled rather than warm.

This flavor can be enhanced by special sauces, either homemade or commercially prepared. Mint sauce and jelly are most commonly used. Because most lamb cuts are tender, they can be cooked without added liquid.

## FREIGHT RATES

in doing so, saved farmers more than \$35 million in transportation costs for seven months beginning June 24, 1968.

Helping to achieve equitable transportation rates, services and facilities for agriculture is one job of the C&MS Transportation and Warehouse Division. Their specialists are deeply concerned with the costs the farmer pays to move his products through marketing channels.

The two railroad freight rate increases that USDA protested stemmed from actions which first began in 1967 when the railroads asked the Interstate Commerce Commission for approval to increase their freight rates.

In that case, C&MS's transportation specialists presented evidence to show that the increased rates had not been adequately justified by the railroads.

Despite this, the Commission concluded that additional revenue was needed by the railroads and authorized the increases, with minor modifications.

In March, 1968, the railroads again petitioned for further increases in rates—this time ranging from three to ten percent. The burden of increased rates on agricultural and food products would amount to at least \$10 million per month.

C&MS transportation specialists again concluded that prospective railroad cost increases had been overstated and requested the Commission to suspend and investigate the new rates.

On June 19, the Commission suspended the rates for seven months and ordered an investigation, but authorized the railroads to adopt new tariffs on short notice that would increase rates not to exceed three percent, approximately one-half of the railroads' original request. The reduced scale was also put under investigation by the ICC.

*Editor's Note:* Since this story was prepared, the Interstate Commerce Commission on Nov. 26 granted interim authorization to the railroads to put into effect immediately the

full increases they had requested. On Nov. 27, USDA and other interested shippers sought a temporary restraining order from the U. S. District Court in Washington, D. C., citing the higher rates as an undue burden on shippers of agricultural products. This request was denied, and the rate increases went into effect Nov. 28. Grain, and scrap and pig iron were excepted from the Nov. 26 interim decision.

## PLANTS ARE KNOWN BY "FINGERPRINTS"

A set of plant's "fingerprints," or physical characteristics, can be used to identify plant varieties, according to seed technologists of the Testing Section for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service.

Technologists at a recent field day at the USDA Agricultural Research Center in Beltsville, Md., said a "fingerprinting" system based on several physical characteristics is used to determine if a plant grown from a certain seed can be identified as a particular variety.

Phenotypic, or physical, characteristics are used as the basic criteria for identifying varieties. It is possible to group certain distinguishable characteristics of a variety and computerize this information. The information could then be used to distinguish one particular variety from hundreds of other varieties in a matter of a few minutes.

This identification, or trueness-to-variety testing, is a voluntary program offered by USDA to breeders and growers to determine if seeds sold to the public are distinct varieties. This program was developed because of a need for the standardization of varietal names so that one distinct variety would not have several varietal names or designations.

Crops such as cowpeas, hybrid sorghum, hybrid onions and garden beans are tested in fields across the United States to insure that they are distinct varieties. Some varieties are even grown in two or more areas for testing since environment can also affect the physical appearance of a

plant.

To meet the requirements of a variety, seed technologists said that at least 95 percent of the plants grown for testing must meet certain requirements of a subdivision of a kind. A kind is usually characterized by growth, plant, fruit, seed or other characters by which it can be differentiated from other varieties of the same kind.

Technologists also noted that about 50 percent of the hybrid sorghum plants tested did not meet the definition of a variety because they contained more than 5 percent off-type plants.

Each year about 100 kinds of seeds are grown and tested by USDA to determine whether they are varietal mixtures, mislabeled as to variety or distinct varieties. □

## CHRISTMAS TREE GRADES

From the town marketplaces of 16th century Europe to the concrete shopping centers of modern America, a common Christmas-time sight has been rows upon rows of Christmas trees awaiting the Yuletide shopper.

However, the modern shopper has an advantage over his Renaissance counterpart because he has the assistance of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service in helping him pick the best Christmas tree for his money. C&MS marketing specialists have devised standards and quality levels for Christmas trees, grading them for shape, density, freshness, cleanliness, and absence of defects.

The three grades for Christmas trees in order of quality are: U.S. Premium, U.S. No. 1, and U.S. No. 2. Premium trees have a fresh, clean, healthy appearance with at least a medium amount of foilage. U.S. No. 1 and No. 2 trees have the same characteristics, but they may be less well-shaped or have some minor defects, such as a slightly crooked trunk.

Although grades are used mainly by large-scale buyers and sellers of



Christmas trees, you may occasionally find individual trees tagged to show the grade.

But you can do your own grading—look for freshness (the needles should not fall off when you rap the base on the ground), for shape (the tree should be symmetrical on at least three sides unless you're going to hide two sides in a corner), and for density (you don't want large open spaces between branches).

### C&MS PREPARES FOOD PLANS FOR NUCLEAR ATTACK

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's work on a comprehensive food management program to use in case of nuclear attack resulted this year in the development and adoption of two Standby Defense Food Orders.

USDA is now working with officials at State and local levels to familiarize the food industry with the program which is designed to regulate food processing and distribution in case of nuclear emergency.

With "emergency preparedness" as its basic concept, the Defense Programs Branch of the Consumer and Marketing Service's Transportation and Warehouse Division is primarily responsible for planning and operations within the areas of food processing and distribution—through the wholesaler level—in the event of a nuclear emergency. State and local governments are responsible for distribution at the retail level and for consumer rationing and feeding.

A nationwide exercise was conducted this year to test the readiness of USDA State and County Defense Boards in post-attack reporting procedures. Food management conferences for agency personnel were held in 21 States, and food management orientation meetings were held for newly appointed food management representatives in 11 States. State emergency resource management plans which include a section on food were received from 19 States, bringing the total to 34 States which

have emergency resource management plans available in final form.

### PLENTIFUL FOODS FOR DECEMBER

Old St. Nicholas, thanks to a bumper harvest season of many choice crops, is providing December consumers with a wide choice of plentiful foods, the Consumer and Marketing Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture reports.

The Plentiful Foods List for that merry month carries such favorite foods as fresh oranges and fresh grapefruit, prunes, turkeys and broiler-fryers, canned tomatoes and tomato products, onions and dry beans.

Estimated ready-to-cook weight of turkeys for December marketings is expected to run about 7% below a year earlier, but October 1 cold storage holdings were around 374 million pounds. January 1 holdings are forecast to be well above normal. Marketings of broiler-fryers in December are estimated at 5% above that same month last year.

A U.S. crop of fresh oranges is expected to top 89 million boxes—that is Early, Midseason and Navel oranges, excluding Temples. That's 43% greater than the 1967-68 crop and 41% above the recent 5-year average. Florida's crop is up 32% above last season. Florida Temples are placed at 5 million boxes, up 11% from a year earlier and a third above average. Florida grapefruit production is predicted at 42 million boxes, 28% above last season's harvest and 26% more than average.

California's dried prune output is estimated at 160,000 natural condition tons.

There's a very large pack of canned tomatoes and tomato products; in fact, the 1968 crop for processing is estimated at a record—30% over a year earlier and 45% above average.

The production of dry beans this year is placed at 18.3 million hundredweight—18% more than last year. Late summer output of onions, the source of storage supplies, is the second biggest on record. □

## INSPECTION FOR YOUR PROTECTION

While spices are a traditional ingredient of sausage, metal particles aren't! In checking a 500-pound sausage mixture at a processing plant, a U.S. Department of Agriculture meat inspector found metal particles deposited in it by broken chopper blades.

Condemning this mixture—to assure that unwholesome sausage didn't reach someone's breakfast table—was one of several recent routine actions carried out around-the-clock by inspectors with USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service. Others include:

... Rejecting 573 boxes of imported beef that had been damaged by water and smoke in a fire aboard the ship that was transporting the meat to the United States.

... Detaining—under new authority granted by the Wholesome Meat Act—a 40,000-pound shipment of fresh pork hams that had arrived at destination in allegedly unsound condition, until it could be reinspected to determine its fitness for food.

... Condemning 28,406 pounds of a shipment of spoiled beef carcasses which were detained in transit under new inspection authority.

... Condemning a load of 14 live calves found to be affected with pneumonia.

... Refusing entry into the United States of an 8,350-pound mixture of canned meat balls and gravy, found at the port-of-entry to be contaminated. □

# 40 YEARS of PROCESSED FRUIT AND VEGETABLE STANDARDS

*Since 1928, the U.S. standards have influenced marketing and quality of canned, frozen, and dehydrated fruits and vegetables.*

By Fitzhugh L. Southerland, Deputy Director, Fruit and Vegetable Division, C&MS, USDA

**"IT IMPROVED** the quality of our product, increased the acceptance of our brand, and stabilized our market."

The general manager of a fruit canning plant in Florida made this comment about the U.S. Department of Agriculture inspection service used in his plant. The voluntary inspection service certifies the quality of processed foods and is based on the U.S. standards for frozen, canned, dried and dehydrated fruits and vegetables.

Forty years ago, there weren't any national standards for processed fruits and vegetables. Standardization was done on a State or regional level, and made for quite a diversity of opinion and application.

In 1926, canned fruits and vegetables were listed among those products that could be stored in licensed warehouses to be used as collateral for loans. Since there was such a variation in quality of those products at the time, it was important to have a certificate of quality on which to base the loan. Because of the need for such certification, USDA published the first national U.S. grade standards in 1928—for canned corn, peas, and tomatoes.

U.S. grade standards describe the quality requirements of each grade for each specific product. Most standards for processed fruits and vegetables cover three grades. U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy is the top quality. Foods of this grade will have excellent color, proper ripeness, uni-

formity, and—most important—good flavor. U.S. Grade B or U.S. Choice is good quality and suitable for most purposes. U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard represents a lower quality and a thrifty buy where appearance is not too important. The U.S. standards are issued after giving careful consideration to the comments and recommendations of the industry that uses them.

When the new standards were published, the next step was to foster uniformity, not only in the language of the standards but also in their application. A Federal inspection service was begun in 1931 and operated out of two branch offices—Philadelphia and Chicago.

The Federal inspection service grew slowly at first, but expanded rapidly during World War II and during the early growth of the frozen food industry following the war. During World War II, and thereafter, the military and other governmental agencies demanded inspection and certification of the processed fruits and vegetables they purchased to determine quality compliance with contract specifications. Many processors and commercial buyers also demanded inspection to facilitate trading.

Development of the frozen food industry proceeded rapidly following the war. Because of the newness of this industry and the high risks involved in packing frozen foods, most of the packers, distributors and buyers demanded inspection and cer-

tification. Many financing institutions required certificates of quality and condition on frozen foods offered as collateral for loans. The latter factor also served as an impetus to continuous inspection, a new type of service which was first made available in 1939.

Under this service, a highly trained inspector of the Fruit and Vegetable Division of USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service is in the plant at all times of operation. He checks the raw materials and the sanitation of the plant and plant equipment as well as the finished product. In 1967, there were 335 plants operating under the continuous inspection program and other types of in-plant inspection.

The number of U.S. grade standards has grown from the initial three to 149—and they now cover canned, frozen, dried, dehydrated fruits and vegetables, and related products like pickles, ketchup, and peanut butter. About 35 percent of the canned fruits and vegetables and 80 percent of the frozen fruits and vegetables packed are now officially inspected.

The long-range effect of the U.S. standards has been to improve the overall quality of all processed fruits and vegetables and to aid in marketing these products. Most of what is sold meets the standards for U.S. Grade B, or better.

In the future, the U.S. standards will influence the quality of processed fruits and vegetables all over the world, as many of the basic re-



quirements of the U.S. standards are included in Codex Alimentarius Standards that are being developed. The Codex Alimentarius Commission was set up in 1963 under the sponsorship of the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Health Organization to establish international standards for foods that would help to break down trade barriers and facilitate international trade.

The Commission established various committees (about 17) to work on development of all aspects of food standards. Representatives of the United States actively participate in the committee meetings and in drafting of the standards.

One of these committees, known as the Codex Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables, held its first meeting in Washington, D.C., in May 1965. This Committee has met each year since its inception and has drafted proposed international standards for over 25 processed fruits and vegetables. These draft standards move through 10 steps in the procedure for developing international standards. Six of these standards are now ready for circulation to about 65 member countries of the Codex Alimentarius Commission for acceptance.

The significance of the U.S. grade standards for processed fruits and vegetables is not the fact that the first standards were developed 40 years ago. It is their wide use by all segments of the industry and their aid in packing and marketing these products. It is also the influence they exert on improving quality of the products to better satisfy the consumer.

What lies ahead? Many new developments are taking place in the processing industry. Mechanical harvesting, development of new varieties of fruits and vegetables and new methods of processing are only a few of the changes happening right now. C&MS's Fruit and Vegetable Division plans to keep up with the changes, revising and updating their standards and developing new ones to keep pace. USDA looks forward to another fruitful forty years. □

## **MARKETING ORDERS ACTIVE IN FISCAL 1968**

The farm value of a wide range of fruits, vegetables, and specialty crops sold under Federal marketing orders reached \$1.6 billion during fiscal 1968.

This total value figure was another sign of the continued reliance farmers place on these programs which help them match supply to demand, achieve orderly marketing of their crops, and generally enhance their bargaining positions. A total of 47 marketing agreements and orders were in effect during the 12 months ending June 30, 1968.

Each order is designed to meet the specific needs of crops in certain geographic areas and is administered by committees composed of growers and handlers. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service offers guidance to the committees in helping them meet changing conditions.

The recent fiscal year also proved that marketing orders, once enacted, are flexible tools for the farmers to use. Seven existing orders were amended by growers during 1968 and proceedings to amend several others were underway at year's end.

Florida tomato growers, for example, reactivated their dormant marketing order, revised certain handling regulations, and restructured the administrative committee. The result is an updated and more effective marketing program.

Growers of Southeastern potatoes likewise reactivated their order and were better able to market a crop which was 15 percent above average. The industry received an additional \$3 million return.

Two other marketing orders, those for Idaho-Eastern Oregon onions and California dates, were amended to allow for paid advertising, financed by the growers and handlers through the administrative committees.

Among the proceedings which began in fiscal 1968 but were finalized later in the calendar year was a significant amendment to the cranberry marketing order. The amendment authorizes a six-year base pe-

riod, ending in 1974, after which cranberry growers may be annually allotted specific quantities for marketing. In this way, the cranberry industry, through the marketing order's administrative committee, can match production with expected demand. □

## **FIRST FULL YEAR FOR THE COTTON RESEARCH AND PROMOTION ACT**

"Comfortable, Carefree Cotton—You Can Feel How Good It Looks," has been a familiar phrase for the past year throughout the advertising media. That theme is being used as part of a promotion campaign for the cotton industry and its products.

Operating for the first full year in 1968, the Cotton Research and Promotion Act was enacted by Congress in July, 1966, as a self-help program to broaden markets and improve the competitive position of cotton. It provides for an assessment of \$1 per bale from upland cotton producers to finance the program.

During 1968, about \$5.3 million, or two-thirds of the 1968 budget of \$8 million, was used for sales promotion and advertising. Eighty-five percent of these funds were used for advertising in printed publications with emphasis on national magazines, daily newspapers and cooperative promotions with manufacturers and retailers.

The remaining one-third of the budget, \$2.7 million, was devoted to research on cotton insects and diseases, weeds, mechanization and consumer quality improvement.

Administering the program is a 20-man Cotton Board, selected by the Secretary of Agriculture from nominations made by cotton producer organizations. Implementing the research and promotion projects is the Cotton Producers Institute, an organization of cotton producers under contract to the Cotton Board.

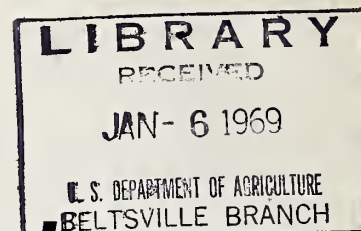
Consumer and Marketing Service's Cotton Division officials work closely with the Cotton Board to insure that the program is conducted in accordance with provisions of the Cotton Research and Promotion Act. □

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# Food Help Expands

*In an increasing number of counties and cities the needy are benefiting from C&MS programs.*

AS THE HOLIDAY season approaches, low-income persons in family units in an ever-increasing number of counties and cities can look forward to a brighter Christmas because they are receiving food help from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The pace of USDA's drive to bring food help to those who need it most is illustrated by the following: On June 30, 1968, 5.6 million needy adults and children in family units in 2,262 counties or independent cities in the United States were enjoying better diets through USDA's family food-help programs. By September 30, the respective figures were some 2,480 operating units with an estimated 6.1 million adults and children benefiting.

Some 491 of the Nation's 1,000 poorest counties take part in the Food Stamp Program of USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service. The remainder are in USDA's Commodity Distribution Program. This illustrates the fact that USDA's family food-help programs are operating where they are needed most—in economically poor rural and urban areas.

In August 1968, these USDA family food help programs were in areas carrying 83.4 percent of the Nation's population.

The Food Stamp Program works very simply. Eligible households buy food stamp coupons with the money they would normally spend for food. They then receive additional coupons free of charge. These addition-

als, the Federal Government's contribution to the program, puts more fresh meat, fresh milk and eggs, fresh vegetables and fruit, and other perishables on the recipients' tables.

The food stamp coupons can be spent like money in any retail food store authorized by C&MS to accept them. C&MS places no limitation on the number of stores that can be authorized, so food stamp families can continue to shop in their neighborhoods at stores of their own choice.

In August 1968, those taking part in the program received an estimated \$17.4 million worth of extra food buying power in "bonus" coupons. In August 1967, value of bonus coupons was about \$12 million.

USDA's Commodity Distribution Program also works quite simply. Those taking part in it receive each month through their State and local governments free donations of USDA food. Since 1960, these food donations per person per month have increased from 12½ to 35½ pounds. The number of foods donated has risen from five to 22 or so. And the contribution these foods now make to an individual's nutritional needs are these: 100 percent needed protein; 70 to 100 percent of recommended daily allowances of seven other basic nutrients; and nearly 75 percent of an individual's daily calorie needs.

In April 1968, USDA took a giant step forward to bring food assistance to needy persons in the low-income counties. Officials of USDA decided

to operate food donations programs directly where local officials declined to do so. This was a reluctant, last-ditch measure, as Secretary of Agriculture Orville L. Freeman says:

"We strongly believe that food-assistance programs are best operated as a partnership between Federal, State, and local governments. The Department undertakes direct operation of a commodity distribution program only as a last resort. We hope that local officials in areas with federally operated food programs will decide to assume local administration of these programs."

In September 1968, food donation programs in 48 of the 1,000 poorest counties were USDA-operated. Some 184 other poor counties had programs with financial aid from USDA. These accomplishments fulfilled a USDA pledge made in July 1967 to get family food-help programs in all of the Nation's 1,000 financial poorest counties. Then about one-third of these counties had none at all.

Some 493 other counties and 21 independent cities have voiced no plans or interest to take part in USDA's family food programs. Many of these harbor pockets of poverty where a USDA food help program might contribute to the health and stability of the respective communities. "We sincerely hope that officials in these counties and cities will see the need of a USDA family food-help program to benefit their less fortunate citizens," Secretary Freeman said. "USDA has the food and is ready to bring it to them." □